

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

February 1, 2012

The Honorable Leon E. Panetta  
Secretary  
Department of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Panetta:

When the Department of Defense announced its Fiscal Year 2013 budget priorities last week, it included a proposal for at least one further round of base realignments and closures (BRAC). While any future BRAC round must be authorized by Congress, we are very concerned about this proposal. Accordingly, we write to respectfully request that the Department provide us a briefing on the rationale and the details for its plans as soon as possible.

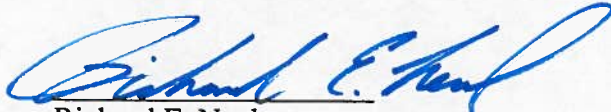
As you may know, Massachusetts is home to critical military installations of vital importance to our national defense. Hanscom Air Force Base and Natick Soldier Systems Center have great military value. Our men and women in uniform depend on the life saving equipment and the technological innovations developed and tested at both Hanscom and Natick. Moreover, the extraordinary intellectual and technical assets in this region have created the country's leading defense industrial cluster, which would be impossible to recreate elsewhere. In addition to Hanscom and Natick, Massachusetts has four additional military installations, including the Westover Air Reserve Base in Chicopee, Fort Devens, Air Station Cape Cod, and Sector SE New England in Woodshole, that are key components to our military infrastructure.

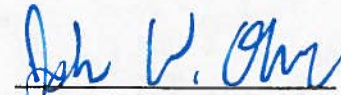
Thank you for your attention to this important matter. If you have any questions, please have a member of your staff contact William Spring of Congressman Markey's staff at [William.Spring@mail.house.gov](mailto:William.Spring@mail.house.gov) or 202-225-2836, Kevin McDermott of Representative Tierney's office at [Kevin.McDermott@mail.house.gov](mailto:Kevin.McDermott@mail.house.gov) or 202-225-8020, or Nathan Bell at Representative Tsongas' office at [Nathan.bell@mail.house.gov](mailto:Nathan.bell@mail.house.gov) or 202-225-3411.

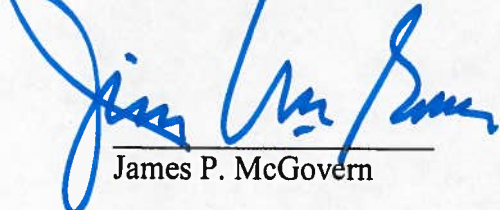
Sincerely,

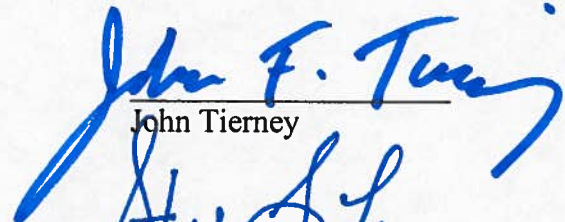
  
Edward J. Markey

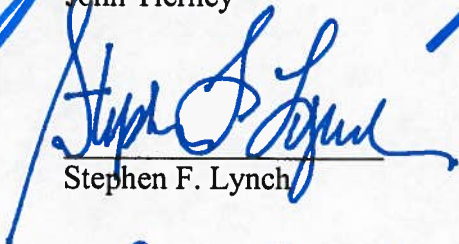
  
Barney Frank


  
Richard E. Neal

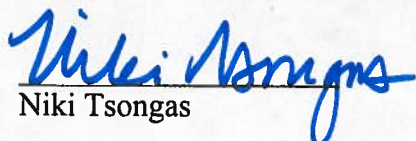
  
John Olver

  
James P. McGovern

  
John Tierney

  
Stephen F. Lynch

  
Michael E. Capuano

  
Niki Tsongas

  
William R. Keating